IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the Specification at Page 5, Lines 13-17, as follows:

FIGURE 2C is a schematic diagram illustrating coupling of the switches of FIGURE 1 according to a second topology; [[and]]

FIGURE 2D is a flowchart showing example steps associated with sending and receiving stack messages; and

FIGURE 2E is a flowchart showing example steps associated with one embodiment of resolving switch number conflicts in a stackable switch system.

Please amend the Specification at Page 14, Line 6 - Page 15, Line 2, as follows:

If a switch determines that it must give up its switch number, then it will assign itself the lowest available switch number for the stack 10. As described above, each switch stores a list of available stack numbers. The above process is repeated until it is determined each switch 12 has a unique switch number. It should be noted that the above process may result in two or more switches 12 both relinquishing their switch number and selecting the same new switch number, in which the case switch conflict resolution procedure continues until no conflicts exist.

FIGURE 2E is a flowchart showing example steps associated with one embodiment of resolving switch number conflicts in a stackable switch system. Further details and embodiments of each of the example steps are described above. Resolving switch number conflicts in a stackable switch system beings at step 152. At step 154, a message is communicated from a switch to another switch. In one embodiment, the communication may include communicating a message from a first switch in the stackable switch system to a second switch in a stackable switch system. At step 156, a switch is determined to have the same switch number as another switch. In one embodiment, the determination may include determining, based on the communicated message, that the first switch in the stackable switch system has the same switch number as the second switch in the stackable switch system.

At step 158, whether a switch should keep the switch number or select a new switch number is determined. In one embodiment, the determination may include, in response to the determination that the first and second switches have the same switch number, determining whether the first switch should keep the switch number or select a new switch number. In a

further embodiment, as described above, each switch 12 determines whether it will keep its switch number or seek a new switch number according to predetermined rules. At step 160, the switch number of a switch is changed. In one embodiment, the change may include changing, by the first switch, the switch number of the first switch. In another embodiment, the change may include changing, by the second switch, the switch number of the second switch. In a further embodiment, as described above, the process may result in two or more switches 12 both relinquishing their switch number and selecting the same new switch number, in which the case switch conflict resolution procedure continues until no conflicts exist.

At step 162, a switch number is selected as a new switch number for a switch. In one embodiment, the selection may include selecting, as a new switch number for the first switch, the lowest available switch number. At step 164, the selected new switch number is communicated to another switch. In one embodiment, the communication may include communicating the selected new switch number to the second switch.

Thus, a method and system for resolving switch number conflicts has been described that allows switch number resolution by identity switch number conflicts through passing stack messages and then resolving such conflicts according to predetermined rules. In one example these predetermined rules involve characteristics of a switch passed through stack messages 48. Such a system and method may provide, in some embodiments, certain technical advantages, although such advantages are not required. For example, a method for resolving switch number conflicts is provided that does not require a switch reset in some instances. Further, the ability to reset switch numbers without losing configuration for the switch number may be achieved. In addition, the ability to replace a failed switch within a stack with a new switch and have the configuration of an old switch restored may be achieved. Further, no intention is needed to resolve switch number conflicts.